

The Biography of Music Legend Doc Watson

Blind But Now I See

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Kent Gustavson, PhD

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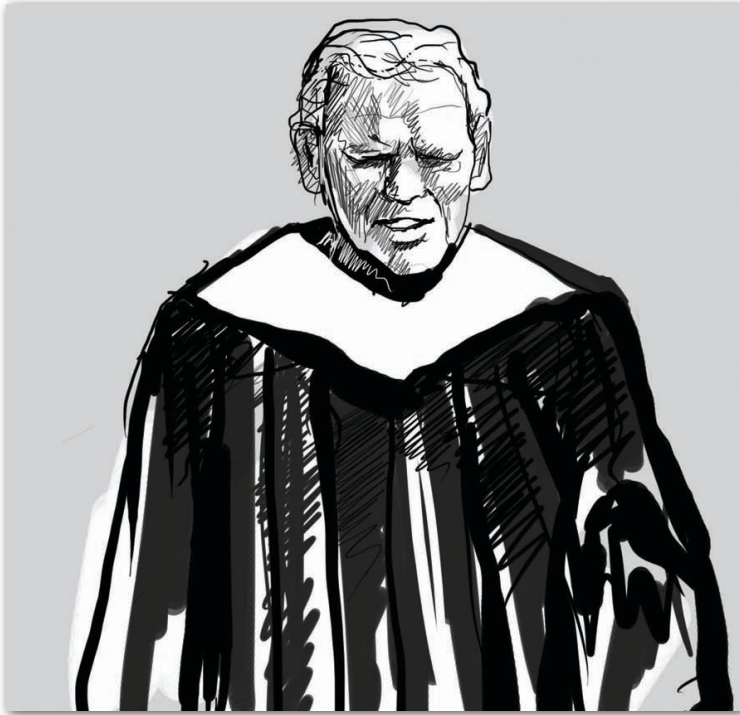


Kent Gustavson

“We all owe him a lot for breaking down the barriers and being such a musical genius, and giving us a direction to go in.”

- Jerry Douglas





Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Doc Watson's discovery by Ralph Rinzler, Blooming Twig Books has just released "Blind But Now I See," (www.docwatsonbook.com) a no-holds barred biography of the legendary guitarist's life and career. Written by Dr. Kent Gustavson, this controversial, first-ever biography of the folk and bluegrass icon has quickly become an Amazon Bestseller, reaching #1 in the Country & Folk category. The book was researched over six years, and provides the first ever comprehensive look into the folk music icon's life. "Blind But Now I See" also features dozens of never-before-seen photographs, as well as artist renderings from throughout Doc Watson's childhood and career.

The book reveals never before released details about Doc Watson's life including:

The inside story of Doc Watson's discovery and rise to greatness, researched from the private notes of his late discoverer Ralph Rinzler, detailing Doc's rise from sideman to superstar and from local stages to Carnegie Hall.

A full history of Doc's family, his time at the Raleigh School for the Blind, his family's deep roots in North Carolina, and his treasured first string instrument, a banjo crafted by his father from the hide of his granny's old cat.

The true story of Doc's son, slide guitarist Merle Watson's rise to the top, his tragic tractor accident, and his friends who gathered around his grave at the funeral to sing "Midnight Rider."

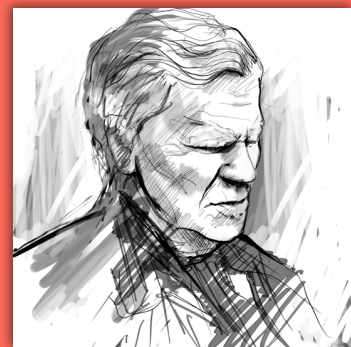
"Doc Watson is not only a great-great-grandfather himself; he is the patriarch of a long line of flatpicking guitarists like Clarence White and Tony Rice, and the father of the acoustic genre, intimately influencing everyone from Bob Dylan to the Grateful Dead, and from Gillian Welch to Pete Seeger. Doc Watson is a bridge between old and new music, electric and acoustic, New York and Nashville. He is a living, breathing, Americana museum, and he's still out on the road touring today at age 87."

Dr. Gustavson, professor, musician, classical composer and author of "Blind But Now I See" is currently available for interviews, feature stories and speaking engagements on Doc Watson and his impact on the American music industry and the evolution of country, folk and bluegrass music.

About

BLIND BUT NOW I SEE

The Biography of Music Legend Doc Watson



Featured Interviews

Ben Harper, Michelle Shocked, Warren Haynes, Sam Bush, Bela Fleck, Tom Paxton, Maria Muldaur, John Cohen, Mike Seeger, Peggy Seeger, Abigail Washburn, Ketch Secor, Marty Stuart, Norman, Blake, Tony Rice, Pat Donohue, Peter Rowan, Si Kahn, Tommy Emmanuel, Tony Trischka, Greg Brown, Guy Clark, Don Rigsby, David Grisman, Alice Gerrard, Alan O' Bryant, Edgar Meyer, Guy Davis, Jack Lawrence, Tao Rodriguez-Seeger, Jean Byrd, Larry Long, Paddy Moloney and more...



Photo by John Hudson ©

Reviews



**Bestseller in
Country/Folk
Biographies!**

“...a landmark biography.”

...”Kent Gustavson has written a biography that is insightful and revealing. “Blind But Now I See,” gives us Doc Watson the human being: a simple yet complex man who has lived a life of tragedy and triumph.”

- Paul Chasman

“...extremely moving and revealing...”

“When I received this book in the mail, I knew that I wanted to read the whole thing. But I had an awfully busy day planned. Once I got started reading, however, it became obvious that a lot of stuff was gonna get procrastinated 'til next day. At 2AM, I was done...but a lot of lingering emotions from this fascinating, incredibly deeply researched look keep resonating...and will for a long time.

Kent's book is an extremely moving and revealing look at one of the most fascinating and influential pickers in American folklore...”

- Paul D. Asbell

“...a well-crafted lens through which we can see and better appreciate our musical heritage.”

“...This anecdotal biography helps me to appreciate Doc's music a lot more. These fascinating stories describe a life lived with integrity, honesty, grit and love. Though these stories are spun as simply as a pair of homemade pants, when taken together, they resound with a harmony and beauty as rich as any of Doc's best gospel tracks...This exhaustively researched book, therefore, is not just the story of one Appalachian man, but a well-crafted lens through which we can see and better appreciate our musical heritage.”

- M. Spicher Schonberg

“...it is clear that the author has the highest level of respect for the subject...”

“...it is truly such a well written book that it needs to be shared. As a longtime fan of Doc Watson, I've been disappointed to find such little information about his life. That changed with this book...This book belongs on every bookshelf and in every guitar case in America.

- J.M. Culver

Media Questions

1. What could be “controversial” about Doc Watson’s biography? Why has there been so much hype around this unauthorized biography?
2. As a PhD classical composer, why were you interested in Doc Watson as the subject for this book?
3. Tell me about your own musical background – are you from North Carolina? How did you become interested in Appalachian music?
4. What makes Doc Watson’s story unique among country, bluegrass, and popular musicians?
5. In the book, you detail the discovery of Doc Watson in great detail. Where did you find that information, and how does it impact the “legend” surrounding Doc?
6. Did you find out anything that surprised you about Doc Watson?
7. A portion of the proceeds of this book are going to the National Federation for the Blind and Playing for Change. What made you decide to donate to these organizations in particular?
8. You often talk about New York and Nashville in the book. Why is it so important to you that Doc had one foot in each city, so to speak?
9. What is Doc’s legacy in the field of music?
10. What kind of people did you interview for this book – it looks like you did something like 70 interviews.
11. Tell us a couple of stories from contributors to the book that listeners might not know about Doc Watson.
12. How did Merle Watson really die? There’s still controversy surrounding his death even 25 years later.
13. What made Doc’s guitar playing so special. Why did he become so revered by guitarists worldwide?
14. What did Doc Watson do for his home region – did he impact the world’s view of Appalachians at all?
15. What about the issue of politics. Doc got his start in music in New York City, and he’s always been a conservative fellow from the mountains. How did he seemingly cross barriers this way?
16. Doc plays a lot of Mississippi John Hurt’s music. What were his thoughts about race?

The Author



Dr. Kent Gustavson earned his Ph.D. from Stony Brook University in New York, where he now teaches music, leadership, and language. He speaks around the world on both music and publishing, and has interviewed hundreds of award-winning musicians and authors for his radio show “Sound Authors.” Dr. Gustavson has released more than a dozen audio recordings on his small independent record label Ninety and Nine Records. He lives and works in Sound Beach, New York. Visit www.kentgustavson.com for more information.

17. You write very reverentially in the book about Doc Watson and his contribution to the world of music, but you also mention near the end of the book that he retreated after Merle’s death.
18. There are also the painful details of Doc’s struggle with blindness, his mischievous school days in Raleigh, and his marriage to his wife who you say was already pregnant and wrote on the marriage papers that she was 18, not 15, when they were married. Many of these details of Doc have never been published before. Why are they important to understanding this legendary musician’s life?
19. You took six years to write this book. Why so long?
20. Why have no biographies of Doc Watson surfaced before now? He is an international star and a legendary figure. Well over 50,000 fans make a pilgrimage to see his festival, MerleFest each year in North Carolina... Why is your biography the first?
21. What is your favorite Doc Watson song?

From the day Doc Watson stepped off the bus in New York City, the North Carolina music legend changed the world forever. His influence has been recognized by presidents and by the heroes of modern music. This is the first comprehensive biography of Doc Watson, with never before released details about the American guitar icon's life.



"When you listen to what Doc is doing on the guitar, it hits you right in the soul!" - Warren Haynes

"Doc seemed to be a hundred years old on his first record and he just gets better." - Bela Fleck

"Doc Watson...can play the guitar...just like water running!" - Bob Dylan

"Doc Watson is an American tradition..." - Ben Harper

"Doc Watson...is a true treasure." - Ricky Skaggs

"The 1st. Each of country music." - Ed Pearl

"Doc is a force of nature." - Peter Rowan

"One of a kind" - David Grisman

Featuring Brand New Interviews with:

Ben Harper, Michelle Shocked, Warren Haynes, Sam Bush, Bela Fleck, Tom Paxton, Maria Muldaur, John Cohen, Mike Seeger, Peggy Seeger, Abigail Washburn, Ketch Seeger, Marty Stuart, Norman Blake, Tony Rice, Pat Donohue, Peter Rowan, Sl Kahn, Tommy Emmanuel, Tony Trischka, Greg Brown, Guy Clark, Don Blasesby, David Grisman, Alice Gerrard, Alan Oerant, Edgar Meyer, Guy Davis, Jack Lawrence, Leo Rodriguez-Seeger, Ueh Ritchie, Jerry Douglas, Jonathan Byrd, Larry Long, Paddy Moloney, and many more....

With photography by:

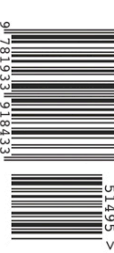
John Cohen, Rob Garland, Mac Slier, Mark Feld, John Rocklin, John Hudson, Bob Voors, Bill Wales, Tony Carledge & Peter Shenkin

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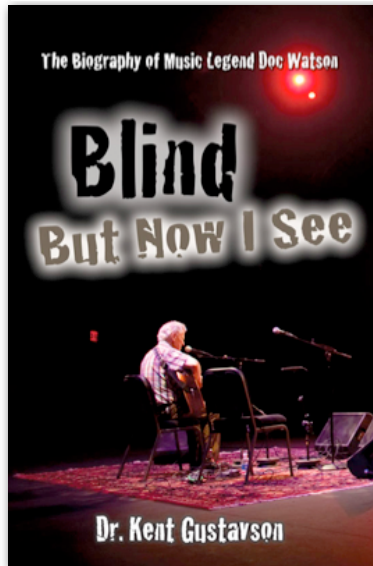
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- 16 pages of full-color pictures
- 30 black & white illustrations



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